

# THE ASYLUM

Quarterly Journal of the  
Numismatic Bibliomania Society

[www.coinbooks.org](http://www.coinbooks.org)

Volume 33, No. 3

July–September 2015

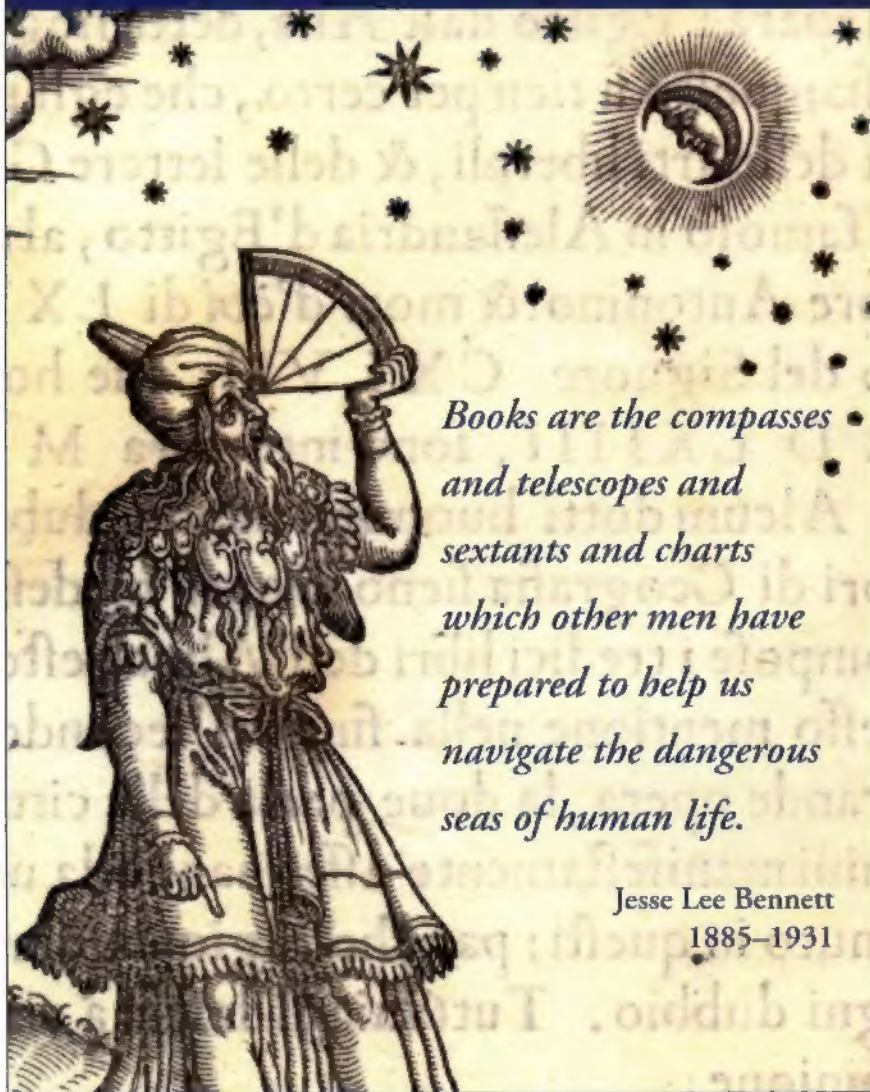




Kolbe & Fanning

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*Books are the compasses  
and telescopes and  
sextants and charts  
which other men have  
prepared to help us  
navigate the dangerous  
seas of human life.*

Jesse Lee Bennett

1885–1931



# The Asylum

Vol. 33, No. 3

Consecutive Issue No. 129

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*Front cover:* Anglo-Gallic angelot d'or, as featured on the cover of the forthcoming book described in the article by Paul Withers in this issue.



## Editor's Introduction

Although the slate of officers who took office at this year's annual meeting of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society in August were all re-elected from the previous term, there is one very important change. At the time the ballots were prepared, David Sundman had decided to step down from the office of Treasurer after many years of quiet and competent service to the organization. However, no candidate for the position had stepped forward yet at that time. Since the annual meeting, Terry White has been appointed Treasurer by the NBS Board. His professional background is in banking, and his numismatic background is as a collector of U.S. copper and tokens. For payment of dues and any other matters concerning membership in the NBS, the new address is:

Terry White, Treasurer  
P.O. Box 39  
Hilliard, OH 43026-1278  
terrywhite5475@yahoo.com

Also, I would like to congratulate the winners of this year's *Asylum* writing awards. In most years, there are only one or two obvious choices, which get most of the votes. This year, members dispersed their votes among a wider range of articles, resulting in close contests for both awards, with several articles ending up within a vote or two of the winners. The winner of the Jack Collins Award for best article by a first-time author in 2014 is Eleonora Giampiccolo, for her "A Brief History of the Medagliere of the Vatican Library" in vol. 32 no. 4, and the winner of the Joel Orosz Award for best article of 2014 is John Kraljevich for "In Memory of a Mensch: John H. Burns" in vol. 32 no. 1. Congratulations to both winners, and to all the other authors, without whose often equally deserving work *The Asylum* could not exist.

—David Yoon



Ford, Farrell, and G. Frederick:  
A Cautionary Tale Advocating Assumption Avoidance  
*Joel J. Orosz*

My trouble with assumptions began one pleasant evening when I was scanning an online bookseller's catalogue and discovered an offering of James T. Farrell's 1954 title *Reflections at Fifty*. The front cover of this volume was adorned with Farrell's literary logo, a conjoined "J" and "F" handsomely outlined in red against a tan backdrop (fig. 1). I instantly recognized this logo as a clone of the bookplate belonging to controversial coin dealer and compulsive numismatic library-builder John J. Ford. A little further research convinced me that my first impression had it backwards. Farrell's use of this conjoined JF literary logo could be traced back as far as 1947 (fig. 2). It now seemed highly likely to me that a young John J. Ford had appropriated the famous James T. Farrell's literary logo for use upon his bookplate. Once I had made this assumption, I was (although I didn't know it yet) doomed to embark on a fool's errand of irrelevant research and wrong-headed writing.

Anyone possessing a book formerly in Ford's library, or participating in George Frederick Kolbe's 2004 and 2005 auction sales of Ford's numismatic literature collection, will instantly recognize the similarities between Farrell's literary logo and JJF's striking bookplate design. The Ford bookplate consists of a capital "J" with a crossbar at the top and a cross-member to the right half way down the shaft of the "J", all rendered in double outline. The overall appearance is that of a merged capital "J" and capital "F," rendered in three blue lines against a white background (fig. 3). Ford's bookplate, as a composition, is spare, clean, and elegant. It was also, I confidently assumed, directly inspired by James T. Farrell's literary logo.

Farrell (1904-1979), born into a large Irish-American family on the south side of Chicago, began writing professionally at the age of 21. He was capable of the sardonic one-liner—"There's one good kind of writer:



Figure 1.

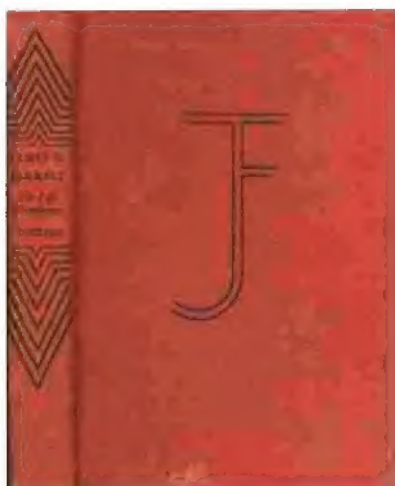


Figure 2.

a dead one"—but he specialized, as both a novelist and a journalist, in realistic depictions of the lives of working-class Irish-American citizens of the nation's second city. His Studs Lonigan trilogy, published between 1932 and 1935, launched him to the forefront of American letters, a status which he found impossible to sustain.

Over the next 44 years, his career was marked by a gradual, but nonetheless perceptible, decline from his mid-Depression high-water mark. This diminution was partly due to Farrell's passionate attachment to leftist politics; his ideological journey began with the Trotskyites, took him to the Socialist Worker's Party, and thence to the Socialist Party. In fact, just prior to his death in 1979, Farrell's main preoccupation was not writing the great American novel, but rather pondering whether he should return to the ranks of his old comrades in the Socialist Worker's Party.

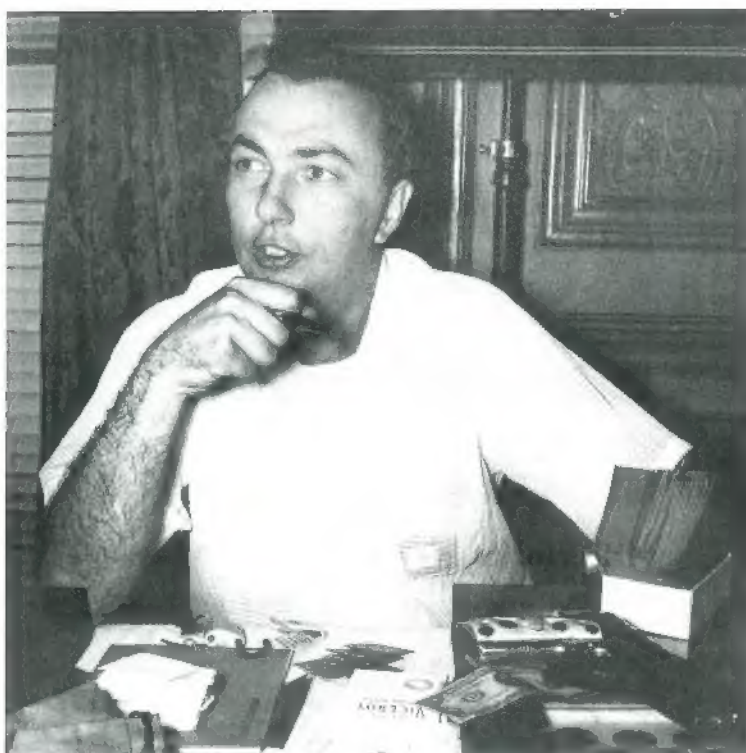
Farrell's descent from the American literary Olympus was gradual enough that he was still considered a major writer through the 1950s. In 1947, the front cover of his *The Life Adventurous, and Other Stories* featured that conjoined J and F literary logo. An encore appearance came in 1954 on the cover of Farrell's *Reflections at Fifty*. The final logo-bearing cover was on *An Omnibus of Short Stories* from 1956.

Young John J. Ford (1924–2005) was an avid reader, in numismatics and in subjects far afield from his profession (fig. 4). It seemed to me



Figure 3.





JOHN J. FORD JR.  
*John J. Ford Jr.*

Figure 4.

highly likely that he saw one or more of these literary logo-emblazoned Farrell books, noted the coincidence of initials, and decided to imitate Farrell's design for his own bookplate. Ford, it seemed, had added a couple of flourishes, such as an extra line in the conjoined J and F monogram, and enclosing the entire composition in a square, three-lined box.

In 1947, when Farrell's logo first appeared, Ford was just beginning to reestablish his numismatic career after service during the Second World War. By 1954, when *Reflections at Fifty* was published, JJF was a partner at the New Netherlands Coin Company, and had developed



the detailed cataloguing style that had made the firm's auction sales the gold standard in the field. A striking bookplate would add substance to his growing numismatic library, and Farrell's literary logo *must*, I thought, have provided him with an enticing template.

Identifying the apparent source for Ford's bookplate design was serendipitous, but what made the story so much fun was its "Odd Couple" angle. Imagine JJF, whose politics were to the right of the John Birch Society, cribbing his bookplate design from James T. Farrell, whose politics were to the left of Joe Stalin! It was too much of an irony to keep to myself.

So, I dashed off a short article for *The Asylum* with the opening sentence taking the form of a riddle: "What did oral historian Studs Terkel and coin dealer John J. Ford have in common?" The answer was that both were debtors to James T. Farrell (Terkel had borrowed his first name from Farrell's trilogy of Studs Lonigan novels, and Ford, of course, must have borrowed Farrell's literary logo). Once done, I decided to submit the brief manuscript to George Frederick Kolbe for his insights and comments.

Within a few hours, Kolbe's kindly, but consequential, critique beeped into my inbox. While he found my assumption that Ford had lifted Farrell's literary logo to be fascinating, Kolbe also said it was utterly wrong. It seemed that Ford, like the great numismatist Harry W. Bass, Jr., had not used a bookplate during his lifetime. It was Kolbe who had inspired the bookplates for both men.

In the case of Bass, Kolbe wanted to identify for future numismatic bibliophiles those books that had graced his superb library. Recalling that Athenian "owls" were among Harry's favorite coins, Kolbe asked Henry Morris, the proprietor of the Bird and Bull Press, perhaps the foremost craft printer in the United States, to design a Bass bookplate using the Athenian owl as its central motif. It just so happened that Morris already had a an owl "slug" (engraving) on hand from a prior printing project, and thus every book sold in the four Bass sales from 1998 to 2000 contained a striking bookplate (fig. 5).

When Kolbe, in 2004, was preparing Ford's splendid library for the first of the two sales, he conferred with the Ford estate's agent, Michael Hodder, and they jointly concluded that it would be desirable to follow the Bass precedent by establishing the books' provenance with an unobtrusive bookplate. Hodder recalled having seen some letters Ford had

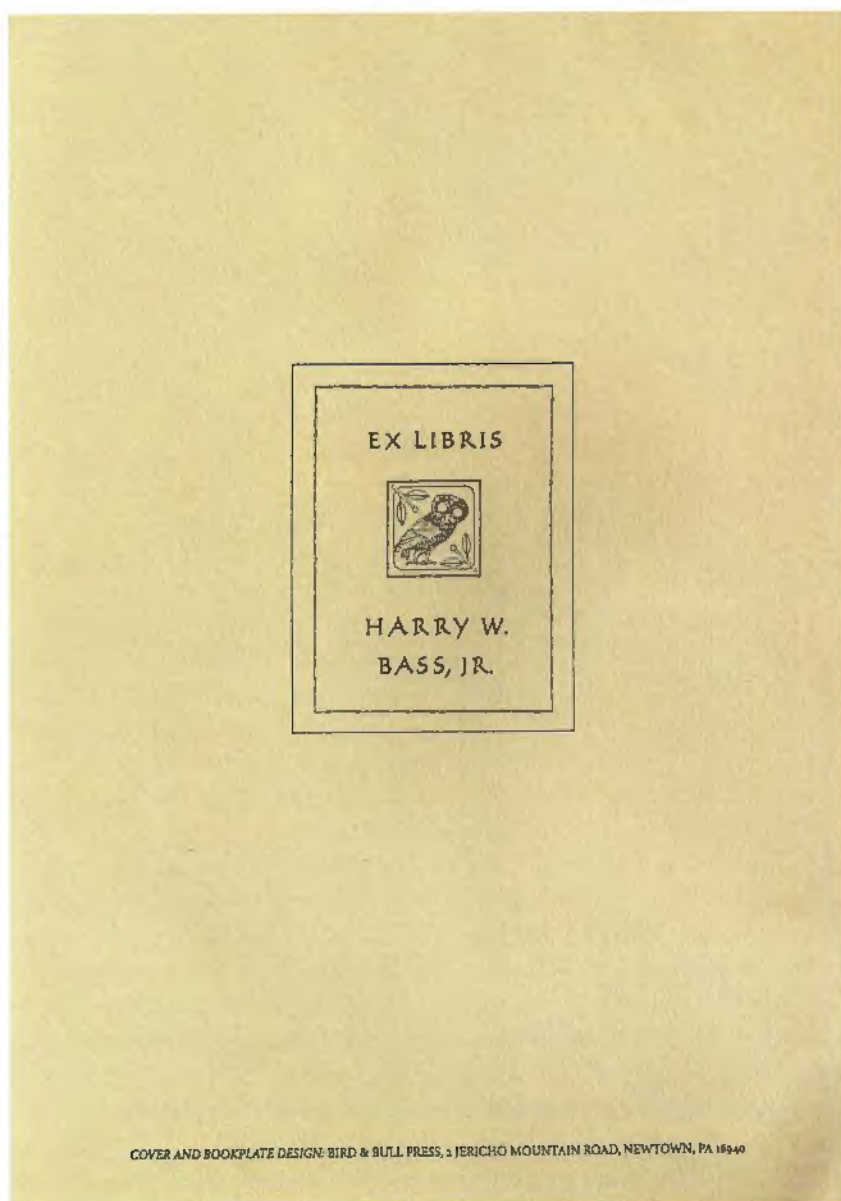


Figure 5.



Figure 6.

signed with his initials "J F." conjoined, and suggested that monogram as a design motif. Kolbe designed a prototype, consisting of the conjoined letters JJF, over the words "Ex Libris" (fig. 6). Hodder preferred the simpler style of Ford's conjoined JF, and somewhere along the line, the "Ex Libris" was eliminated, leaving the conjoined JF as the final version of the bookplate.

Might Kolbe have looked beyond Hodder's idea for additional inspiration while designing the Ford bookplate? The very first time he had ever seen the Farrell literary logo, Kolbe affirmed, was when he examined the illustrations accompanying my manuscript. In point of fact, Hodder and Kolbe had independently devised the conjoined JF design, and it was only by sheer coincidence that it was so evocative of Farrell's literary logo.

My assumption, made almost instantly after seeing the logo on *Reflections at Fifty*, was completely wrong. I had conflated pure coincidence with causation, and jumped to the conclusion that because Ford's bookplate looked so much like Farrell's literary logo, the latter must have inspired the former. The truth of the matter was that Farrell had absolutely nothing to do with Ford's bookplate or, for that matter, with Ford at all (That's for the best: this political odd couple would, like the Kilkenny cats, have devoured each other upon sight.)

At least two lessons of value can be gleaned from this peculiar excursion among the political extremes. First, my experience should serve as an admonishment to us all to document rather than assume the facts. Fortunately, while I had been careless enough to jump to conclusions, I had also been careful enough to send the manuscript to Kolbe for comments, and he had set me straight.

These corrections revealed the second lesson from this exercise: we now know that JJF had no bookplate during his lifetime, and that George Frederick Kolbe took an idea from Michael Hodder and designed the elegant bookplate that establishes the provenance of volumes formerly part of Ford's library. So add yet another achievement to those of being father of numismatic bibliopolism, the Numismatic Bibliomania Society, and *The Asylum*. George Frederick Kolbe was the designer of John J. Ford's bookplate.

### Help Promote the Numismatic Bibliomania Society

Howard A. Daniel III sets up a club table to represent the Numismatic Bibliomania Society (and the International Bank Note Society, Numismatics International, Numismatic Literary Guild, and several other organizations) at the MPC Fest, the International Paper Money Show, and the summer FUN Show. Howard will no longer set up at American Numismatic Association events and the January FUN Show.

*The Asylum* and NBS membership applications are given to numismatists interested in our society from the table. Journals and applications from other societies are also given out.

There are also world bank notes and coins to give to young and new numismatists in a packet which includes a consolidated membership application form for all of the groups. References are also given out, especially to teachers and scout counselors for them to use with their students and scouts.

Howard always needs volunteers to staff the table and needs your unwanted references, journals, world banknotes, and/or world coins. Please contact him at [hadaniel3@msn.com](mailto:hadaniel3@msn.com) to make donation arrangements. The best method is to take them to him at one of the shows or events he attends, otherwise you can mail them to him. Howard will reply with a thank-you letter which will describe the donation for tax purposes.



## Researching and Writing a New Catalogue of Anglo-Gallic Coins

Paul Withers

Anglo-Gallic coins were brought to the notice of collectors in *A Series of above Two Hundred Anglo-Gallic or Norman and Aquitan Coins of the Antient Kings of England, Exhibited in Sixteen Copper-Plates, and Illustrated in Twelve Letters, Addressed to the Society of Antiquaries of London, and several of its Members*, written by Andrew Coltee Ducarel and printed and sold in 1757 by E. Withers, who operated from the Seven-Stars, between the Temple Gates in Fleet Street. (It would be nice to think that he was an ancestor of mine, but it is most unlikely.)

Ducarel, who had been born in Normandy in 1713, was referring to the fact that between 1154 and 1453 the Plantagenet kings of England had interests in France, and the so-called "Anglo-Gallic" coins are the results of coining in those areas by English monarchs in their various capacities as Duke or Prince of Aquitaine, Earl of Poitou, or count of this, that, or the other.

Ducarel derived much from several books including *Les figures des monnoyes de France* by Jean Baptiste Haultin in 1619 and especially the Abbé Venuti's *Dissertation historique sur les monnoyes que les Anglois ont frappées en Aquitaine, et dans d'autres Provinces de France*, published in 1754. Of considerable importance too was Claude Gros de Boze, keeper of the French royal collection of coins, whom Ducarel met in Paris and with whom he later corresponded. Boze had, in 1752, published his work on French feudal coins *Monnoyes des prelates & barons de France*, which contained much that was of use to later authors.

In the late 1700s Edward Hawkins began to compile a catalogue of the coins that were then in the collection of the British Museum. It was

published in 1826. Just four years later George R. Ainslie published his *opus magnum* on the subject, though for some reason best known to himself he did not put his name on it! Ainslie preferred the description "Anglo-French" coins to that of "Anglo-Gallic".

The next advance came about eighty years later, when a well-researched series of articles by Lionel M. Hewlett began to appear in the *Numismatic Chronicle*. These were made available to a wider public in 1920, when A. H. Baldwin and Sons published them in one volume, providing a catalogue of the then known coins that was easy to read and use and contained the latest thoughts and advances.

For sixty years Hewlett's book remained the standard reference on the subject, and it is still worth reading today. However, like all good books, it eventually went out of print and became difficult to find.

In 1984, Spink published *The Anglo-Gallic Coins*, by E. R. Duncan Elias, a collector and enthusiast. He had been researching and collecting since the early 1960s and possibly even before that. He was a Dutchman who spoke excellent English and was a visitor to BANS congresses for several years.

Now, although 1984 does not seem, to some of us, to be a long time ago, thirty years is nevertheless almost half a lifetime, and it is high time to take advantage of the immense progress made by photography, computers, communication, typesetting, and printing, and Galata Print is now getting very close to publishing a new book on the subject. The authors, listed in chronological order, are: Paul Withers, Bente R. Withers, and Steve Ford (fig. 1).

The authors have been researching and/or collecting Anglo-Gallic coins for a dozen years or longer and during that time enjoyed access to major and minor museums at home and abroad, dealers, and auction houses, and were allowed to photograph most important public collections and many private ones. For more than a decade thousands of coins have been photographed and recorded, old books and auction catalogues consulted, and the internet trawled.

The result is a *catalogue raisonnée* of all known types and varieties of gold, silver, and billon coins, including thirty-two major types and hundreds more minor varieties that were not known to Elias. Apart from the major types which Elias did not know, an exact count of the minor varieties is not possible because the items are catalogued in a different way from Elias's work; however, there are many of them.

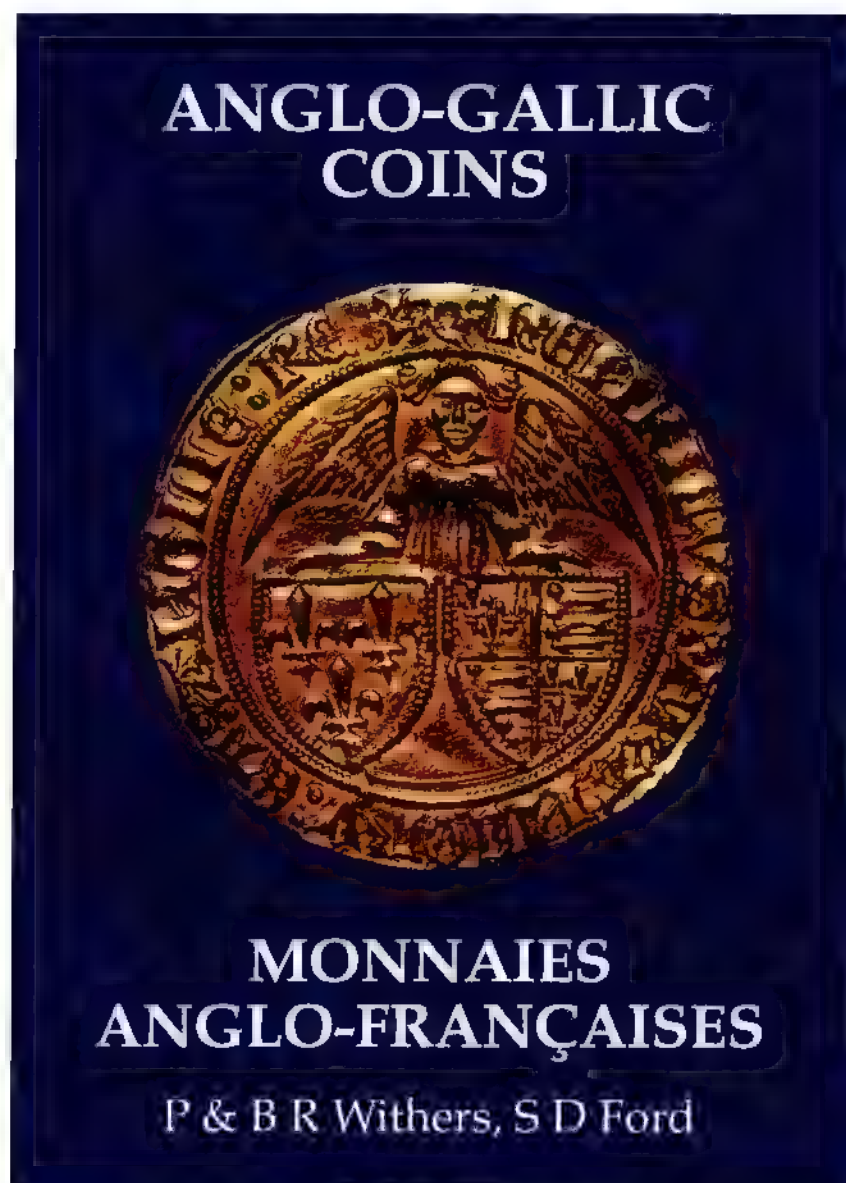


Figure 1. Front cover of the book.

Using their numismatic and other skills the authors have taken the opportunity to correct errors, some of which are thirty years old, and others almost 300 years old. Numerous additions and revisions have been made and the work now includes over 631 1:1 high-quality color illustrations, 334 double-life-size enlargements of important features to help identification, and in addition 154 line drawings and a map – all thoughtfully and carefully presented so as to make the information more accessible to collectors, students, numismatists, dealers, and archaeologists than it has been. The information has been presented visually so that the French reader will understand it almost as well as the English reader. This is to be compared with Elias's 204 black-and-white 1:1 illustrations and 39 line drawings.

One of the problems bedeviling English numismatics for many years was the fact that English kings had no imagination when naming their sons. Thus, it is difficult to separate a series of Henrys and Edwards. Whilst this has largely been done for the English series, the problems have not been conclusively solved for Anglo-Gallic coins, and there are other problems peculiar to the series.

However, the authors have carefully considered the latest hoards and discoveries and the question of which coins were minted during the reign of Edward II and which during the reign of Edward III. This has resulted in the reattribution of many coins. The reasoning behind the changes has been carefully explained in the text. There have also been changes of the order of the coins as perceived by Elias, so as to present them in chronological order.

Major changes have been made to the section on the coins of Bergerac minted by Henry of Lancaster, both as count and duke. No fewer than seven new types are recorded, and many dozens of sub-varieties (fig. 2).

The work includes an extensive bibliography of works in English and French, compiled by Steve Ford in conjunction with Andy Singer. Also included is a timeline of events in England, France, and the rest of the world, which some people may find thought-provoking. There is a section on lettering, which is not just for the beginner. Another section is on how to identify coins. A chapter is devoted to a listing of marks other than letters, including types of crosses found in the book, mint marks, punctuation, issue marks, other secret marks and their possible meanings. The denominations are all discussed, together with the origins of their names.





Figure 2. Gros of Bergerac of a previously unpublished type

Each type and sub-variety of coin is accorded a rarity rating and a table of rarity explains the how they are given. Legends are given for each obverse and reverse, and the combinations in which they occur are given. Highest and lowest known weights are listed.

#### THE STORY OF THE BOOK

Readers may well wish to know why a Welshman, a Dane, and an American have written a book about Anglo-Gallic coins? Why indeed? But there are plenty of equally strange mis-matches of collecting field and nationality. The standard general reference work on coins of the German states, for example, was written not by a German but by an American, and the standard reference on the coinage of the Anglo-Hannoverian personal union (1714-1837) was written, again, not by a German but by an Englishman. Sometimes, citizens of a particular country have been woefully inadequate when it comes to writing about the coins of the land of their birth.

My own stimulus for writing this book came because I had met, several times, the late Edward Elias at British Association of Numismatic Societies congresses. Two friends who have since passed away, David Rogers and Roderick Palmer, both of whom collected Anglo-Gallic coins, were always finding minor varieties of coins that were not listed by Elias in his book. Then there was Peter Woodhead, a most hospitable gentleman, who after dinner one evening showed us some of his collection. Then, aided by the spirit of a good bottle of wine, an idea

struck, why not publish a "Galata Guide" on Anglo-Gallic coins to help collectors. This was because Elias's *Anglo-Gallic Coins* was more or less out of print and, in any case, it was not particularly well illustrated, so we could kill two birds with one stone, so to speak. A little while later we began photographing in earnest, blissfully unaware that something that was planned to be ready within six months would take more than twelve years.

A few years later we met Steve Ford at Peter's home and it was evident that he was a very serious collector indeed and we casually agreed on a collaborative work. Up until that time we had been intent on photographing only the very best specimens for a simple guide; however, it quickly became evident that what was now going to be necessary was that not just the nicest specimens but everything needed to be photographed.

Curiously, at this time a dealer who knows nothing about books rang me to ask if we were interested in buying some old and tatty books that had come in to his shop. They turned out to be Ducarel's 1757 book on Anglo-Gallic coins, E. J. Hawkins's 1826 *Description of the Anglo-Gallic Coins in the British Museum*, and General Ainslie's *Illustrations of the Anglo-French Coinage*, published in 1830. The foundation works of the series were thus in our hands. It was difficult not to regard this as an omen.

As we progressed it became evident that even in major collections much had been missed; even on the gold coins there were secret marks that were evident only on comparison with other coins of the same type. We had to visit a lot of museums for a second, or even third time. Then, about five or six years ago we got exceptional permission to photograph the Anglo-Gallic coins in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, in Paris. This required several visits. Visits to other French museums followed, and even French private collectors opened their doors to us. Thus it was that a coin not seen for a century or more, and only known from a line drawing in an ancient tome, was found and identified as a treasure to two young lady curators of a French provincial museum, who, until they met us had scarcely looked a coin before. We then visited other places, including Copenhagen, Berlin, and Oxford and the Celtic fringes of Edinburgh, Cardiff, and the Royal Mint at Llantrisant.

During this time the catalogue had been developing, coin by coin, and an increasing number of varieties were turning up. Errors in every book from Ducarel to Elias were spotted, largely due to the wonders of mod-

ern digital photography, which mean that coins the size of a sixpence (a dime for US readers) can be displayed and compared side-by-side with one another, both enlarged to the size of a football.

Over those dozen years cameras have improved too, and the several hundred films that had to be developed and printed for the average book are now a thing of the past. Cameras have become more difficult to use, but maybe that's just old-fashioned me. However, the photographer's art remains the same and all depends on lighting and keeping the camera immobile, and to that end I am still using the camera stand that I inherited from Elizabeth Pirie that was designed by Michael Dolley, probably over thirty years old and going strong.

It is not just cameras that have improved; computers have become smaller and their memories have expanded, so the enormous box attached to an even larger CRT screen that stood on my desk a dozen years ago has been replaced by a laptop that will fit into a briefcase and a big flat 20-inch LCD screen. A tiny box that could fit into my pocket accommodates the immense amount of information we need to keep. And that's just the hardware; the software too has developed, so that we can photograph a coin, draw the elements of the script used on the coin and put them onto the pages of a book within a few minutes.

Printing too has improved. Yes, we knew all about it thirty years ago, but that was black and white. The very latest presses produce color images on which you can use a magnifying glass and they do not disappear into a mass of dots!

Well, that tells you a little about the book itself, but how did it get written? I will not say that it was easy, it was not, but that was due largely to the coins themselves. Each bit that was written by one of the authors was edited by the other two. The biggest mistakes in any coin catalogue are faulty reporting of the legend, or inscription, easily not seen correctly, wrongly transcribed, or mis-typed. In this respect two pairs of eyes are better than one, and in this case three pairs are definitely better than two. Interpretations can vary too, but in this case three opinions nearly always came up with the correct one. E-mails flashed across the world from our little Welsh village to the middle of the USA.

Ten years of work! Why do we spend such a long time on a book and make so many checks? In pre-internet days a friend rang asking whether we had seen X's new book. X was a mutual acquaintance who wrote on a subject that interested us both. I had to admit that I had not seen it. I heard a chuckle and when I'd said that I would take a quick look, I was

**RICHARD II**

Duke of Aquitaine 1377-90. King of England 1377-99

The coinage of Richard II is straight-forward, as Bordeaux was the only mint in operation, and most of the coin types had been initially issued by the Black Prince: the *hardi d'or* or the *hardi d'argent* and the *denier*. Richard's new issues were simply companion denominations that circulated alongside the familiar money of his father: a *semi-hardi d'or* and a *double hardi d'argent*.

Although Richard's uncle, John of Gaunt, was made duke of Aquitaine in 1390, there is no evidence that any coins were ever struck in his name.

**GOLD COINS****HARDI D'OR**Diameter 29mm. Weight 3.73-3.75gm. *R2*

Legend around crowned, half-length figure of the king stg. facing, within a tressure of arches. Some coins have a crescent on or after the L.

R. Legend around cross queneée. A quatrefoil, at the centre of the cross.

A left-facing lion in two opposite quarters, a lis in each of the others.

The legend is AVXILIVM MEVM A DOMINO is taken from

Psalm 121, verse 2 "My help cometh from the Lord"

E223-4, B -, P d'A3098-3.01, D1133.



**270** **Bordeaux** E223, P d'A3098-3101 3.68-3.90gm. *R2*

**270A** **Mintmark B. Lis in 1st quarter**

E223b. 3.70-3.90gm, average 3.76gm. *R3*

- 1 \*RICARD' D' GRA AGLB FRACIB D' AQITAQ
- 2 \*RICARD' D' GRA AGLB FRACIB RX D' AQI
- 3 \*RICARD' D' GRA AGLB FRACIB RX D' AQIT
- 4 \*RICARD' D' GRA AGLB FRACIB RX D' AQITAN
- 5 \*RICARD' D' GRA AGLB FRACIB RX D' AQIT
- 6 \*RICARD' D' GRA [ ] AGLB FRACIB D' AQIT
  - a R \* AVXILIVM • MEVM • A • DOMINO • B
  - b R \* AVXILIVM • MEVM • A • DOMINO • B •
  - c R \* AVXILIVM • MEVM • A • DOMINO • B •

Combinations: 1/b, 2/a, 3/a, 3/b, 3/c, 4/a, 4/b, 5/b, 6/b

Elias, E223c, reports a reverse legend with at the beginning. We have not seen to confirm, probably a double-struck coin.

Elias reports an obverse legend variety ending in A. We have not seen to confirm.



**270B** **Mintmark B. Lion in 1st quarter**

E223, a. 3.68-3.77gm, average 3.73 gm. *R2*

- 1 \*RICARD' D' GRA AGLB FRACIB D' AQITA
- 2 \*RICARD' D' GRA AGLB FRACIB D' AQITAQ
- 3 \*RICARD' D' GRA AGLB FRACIB RX D' AQI
- 4 \*RICARD' D' GRA AGLB FRACIB RX D' AQIT
- 5 \*RICARD' D' GRA AGLB FRACIB RX D' AQITA
- 6 \*RICARD' D' GRA AGLB FRACIB RX D' AQI
  - a R \* AVXILIVM • MEVM • A • DOMINO • B
  - b R \* AVXILIVM • MEVM • A • DOMINO • B •

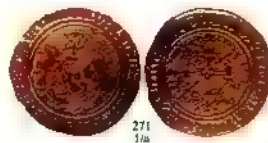
Combinations: 1/b, 2/a, 2/b, 3/b, 4/a, 4/b, 5/b, 6/a, 6/b.



**271** **Without mintmark. Lion in 1st quarter.**

E224, P d'A 3.27gm. *R3*

- 1 \*RICARD' D' GRA AGLB FRACIB D' AQITAQ
  - a R \* AVXILIVM • MEVM • A • DOMINO •



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Figure 3. Sample page from the book.



told that one was in the post to me. It arrived the following morning. The book was accompanied by my friend's list of comments and errors, which was almost as large as the book. I read the chapters that related to my interest and was amazed at the many errors and omissions. I forwarded the text and my corrections to a friend in the USA. I got his immediate response on the American-related section. I forwarded those and my own to the person who had sent the book to me and they were relayed to the author. Alas, I did not keep the book, for it would now be an extremely rare numismatic book because on seeing the comments and the corrections necessary, the author had the entire printing pulped!

This was an important lesson to me, and ever since then I have been ultra-careful as to what I write; pre-publication manuscripts of books are sent to friends for their honest opinions. In the first instance they go to non-numismatists, who ask questions like, "What's the difference between feudal coins and regal coins?" Such people are treasures, not only because they do the job time after time, but because they make you aware that the world is full of real people who know coins through spending them, not collecting them. Then others took over, some correcting split infinitives, not realizing that for a Welshman, the split infinitive is a tool of poetic expression, whilst others corrected spelling and grammatical errors, added commas, and changed my commas for semi-colons or colons where necessary.

Then Duncan stepped in to give the book the once or even thrice over. Some people might say that Duncan is pernickety, perhaps because aside from his numismatic interests, his day job is writing and updating the operating manuals for the atomic power station where he works. You listen very carefully to what he says, or your book could become the blueprint for a numismatic Chernobyl, or if you think that such things are only the result of Soviet failings, remember Three Mile Island, if you are old enough!

We went to France for peace, quiet, and isolation, to get down to the last bit of polishing, which included designing the front cover and mundane tasks such as working out where the tab settings should be, and then making sure that they, and other things were consistent throughout the book. Of such details are the best books made.

It is tempting to be miserly when writing a book. The internal accountant wants you to cram as much onto a page as possible. Paper and printing plates can be costly; however, time has taught me that the

appearance of a book is almost as important as its content. Having a book that looks good can make all the difference between selling a hundred or just a dozen, and a little white space can result in a dramatic difference to the overall appearance of a book and its user-friendliness and clarity.

That process took two whole weeks. Each page is carefully composed and laid out. My day job forty-odd years ago was teaching what we then termed "under-functioning" children, who were sometimes very bright indeed and included some who were suffering from what is now described as Asperger's syndrome. Each part of the learning process was split into small discrete steps. This was good training for the writing of numismatic books because laying out things so that they cannot be misunderstood is essential, and there is, I am sure, a touch of Asperger's in every collector. In scientific subjects, and numismatics is a science, the anal-retentive wins every time!

We were grateful that Michel Dhénin, curator emeritus at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, wrote a preface for our book, not least because he had written a review of Elias's book for the *Revue Numismatique* in 1984. Steve continued making small corrections—among other things adding a previously unrecorded variety—up to the last minute. The book is at the printers and should be available from our website by the time you read this: <http://www.galata.co.uk/store.asp?storeAction=showDetail&stockID=7994>

As our book was about to go to press we got the sad news that Peter Woodhead, our mentor and major inspiration behind this and several other projects, had died, so he never got to see it in print, though he had seen PDFs. I had known Peter for over forty years, and it was his collection that made the book possible in some ways. Of course, it was not as wide or as high in quality as those of the British Museum, the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, or the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, but it held many academic rarities and varieties, pieces that a true collector would recognize as being real treasure. He was hospitable and enjoyed sharing a good meal, a bottle of wine, or his collection. Perhaps he will be remembered by those who didn't know him for his three volumes of SCBI: the Schneider Collection. Those who did know him will remember his quiet humor and his knowledge of European coins of all periods. He had a wide circle of friends which included all the great names of British numismatics, as well as many European collectors and museum people. Our book is dedicated to his memory.

## Off the Shelf: John Allan's 1839 "On Coins and Medals" David F. Fanning

John Allan (1777-1863) was an early American coin collector who, according to Q. David Bowers in *American Numismatics before the Civil War*, is "a candidate for being America's first rare coin dealer" (Figure 1).<sup>1</sup> A Scottish immigrant to New York, he was active from at least the 1820s until his death at age 86 in 1863.

Allan was what one would have called an antiquarian, and a collector of many different things. He was perhaps most significant as a book collector. The sale of his library<sup>2</sup> was the most important book sale to have taken place in America at the time. Catalogued by the famous American bibliographer Joseph Sabin, the 5278 lots brought \$37,698.26, a staggering sum. A post-sale edition of the catalogue was published that included a new introduction and a supplement with printed prices realized and buyers' names.<sup>3</sup>

Over 200 lots of coins and medals were included near the end of the library sale. The buyers included many prominent numismatists, with Cogan, Kline, Appleton, Bushnell, "Strowbridge" [sic], Wiggin, Woodward, Ten Eyck, and others all appearing in the roster. Allan's coins and medals comprise lots 4232 to 4451\* (Attinelli got this wrong), and include a rare medal of Mary, Queen of Scots, purchased by Woodward for \$130 and a Columbian Order medal in silver, sold also to Woodward

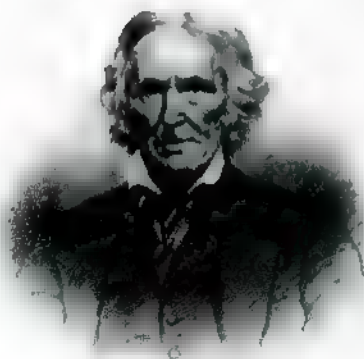
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1 Q. David Bowers, *American Numismatics before the Civil War, 1760-1860. Emphasizing the Story of Augustus B. Sage* (Wolfeboro, N.H.: Bowers & Merena, 1998), p. 27.

2 Joseph Sabin, *A Catalogue of the Books, Autographs, Engravings, and Miscellaneous Articles, Belonging to the Estate of the Late John Allan* (New York: Bangs, Merwin & Co., [May 2,] 1864 and following, postponed from April 25ff).

3 Joseph Sabin, *A Catalogue of the Library and Antiquarian Collection of John Allan, Esq., with the Names of Purchasers and the Price Each Article Sold for, Preceded by a Few Introductory Remarks* (New York: William Gowans, 1865).

Figure 1. A fine engraved portrait of John Allan by Henry B. Hall, commissioned for inclusion in the memorial volume published in Allan's memory by the Bradford Club



*John Allan*

for \$85. Other early American coins and medals balance some British and ancient material. While the numismatic content is overwhelmed by the awesome quality of the library, it would have made for a small but decent sale on its own.<sup>4</sup> Other material derived from Allan's collections was sold in later years, including a coin collection auctioned by Cogan in 1870 (the subject of a plated catalogue).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> An offprint of the numismatic portion is cited in Emmanuel J. Attinelli, *Numisgraphicae, or a List of Catalogues, in Which Occur Coins or Medals. Which Have Been Sold by Auction in the United States, Also, a List of Catalogues or Price Lists of Coins, Issued by Dealers, Also, a List of Various Publications of More or Less Interest to Numismatologists, Which Have Been Published in the United States* (New York, 1876), p. 36.

<sup>5</sup> Edward Cogan, *Catalogue of an Exceedingly Interesting and Valuable Collection of Silver Medals of All Nations, Together with Rare Crowns, etc. Formerly the Silver Cabinet of the Late Mr John Allan, Purchased by the Present Owner, J. C. Newcomb, Esq., Some Years before Mr Allan's Death* (New York: Leavitt, Strebeigh & Co., May 25-27, 1870). This catalogue was only the second numismatic auction sale in the United States to be issued with photographic plates.



Little-remembered today is a short but substantive article Allan published in 1839 (Figure 2) "On Coins and Medals, with a Notice of the Medal which Has Been Recently Struck to Commemorate the Settlement of New Haven, Connecticut," appeared in the October 1839 issue of the *American Journal of Science and Arts*.<sup>6</sup> The article, written on the request of Benjamin Silliman, the editor, consists of a general overview of the subject of numismatics, with a focus on the development of the medallic art since the Renaissance. It opens by providing a rationale for collecting

Novelty, beauty and sublimity are the three great sources of moral and intellectual pleasure, and the incitements to these are well supplied by medals. They display the usages of society, and the habits and forms of persons, with whom history having made us acquainted, we long to see the faces on which their minds and characters were impressed. From a similar feeling we are delighted with the exhibition of the battles, edifices, religious rites, costumes, and innumerable other interesting circumstances belonging to the age, or illustrating the characters and actions of eminent individuals.

After discussing the national medallic series of Europe, Allan made note of the *Comitia Americana* series and mentioned the medals commissioned for Commodores Truxton and Preble. The War of 1812 naval medals are brought up, as is the Erie Canal medal. Some of Allan's commentary is interesting for what it says about the state of numismatic understanding at the time:

Several medals were struck at Paris to commemorate the American revolution. Congress, some years since, made an appropriation to have the whole series placed in the national library at Washington, the vessel that had them in charge (if I recollect right) was lost, and whether any further action has been had, or any progress since made, I am ignorant.

In this particular case, Allan was not recollecting right, though he may well have been repeating a story told to explain the absence of the medals from the Mint Cabinet.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> John Allan, "On Coins and Medals, with a Notice of the Medal Which Has Been Recently Struck to Commemorate the Settlement of New Haven, Connecticut," *The American Journal of Science and Arts*. 37.2 (October 1839): 285-288.

<sup>7</sup> Thanks to John Kraljevich for confirming for me that the story is apocryphal and that I wasn't just forgetting something.

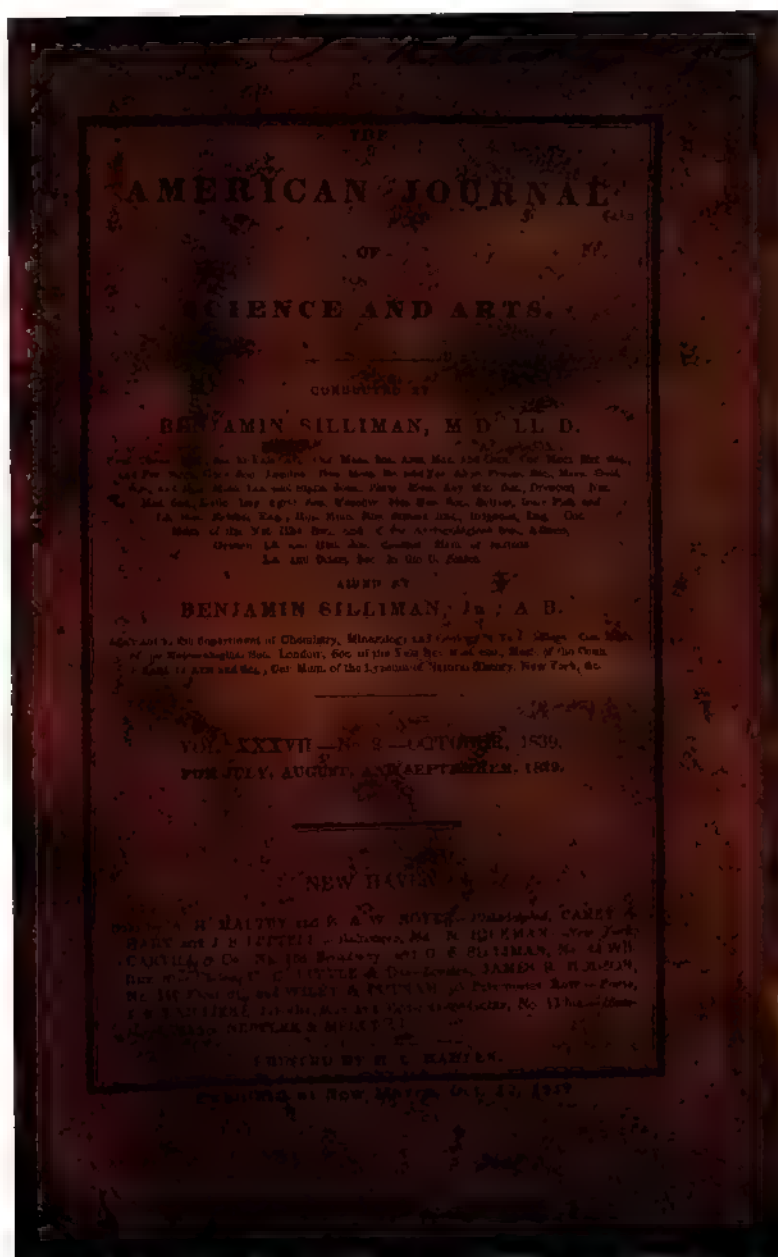


Figure 2 The October 1839 issue of the *American Journal of Science and Arts*, including Allan's "On Coins and Medals."

Allan closed by mentioning the medal struck in commemoration of the bicentennial of the founding of New Haven, Connecticut (home of the *American Journal of Science and Arts*, and the impetus behind Siliman's request for some words by Allan for the journal). Allan was involved in the design of that medal, which was struck by the U.S. Mint.<sup>8</sup>

Allan was very widely respected among his fellow collectors. After his death, the Bradford Club, a bibliophilic society active between 1859 and 1867 in New York, published a memorial volume for him.<sup>9</sup> Attinelli thought highly of him, saying that "Mr. Allan was so noted an antiquarian as to require no further mention from me" — and yet Attinelli himself didn't know of this article, failing to include it in his 1876 *Numisgraphics*.<sup>10</sup>

Allan's article is of considerable importance as one of the very few numismatic works published in this country in the 1830s and as perhaps the only numismatic work authored by Allan, one of our American numismatic pioneers.

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8 The medal is catalogued as CM-37 in R. W. Julian, *Medals of the United States Mint The First Century, 1792-1892* (El Cajon, Calif.: TAMS, 1977). A silver specimen of this medal was sold in the Allan library sale (lot 4299) for \$9.

9 Bradford Club, *Memorial of John Allan* (New York: Printed for the Bradford Club, 1864).

10 Attinelli, *Numisgraphics*, p. 36.

## Numismatic Bibliomania Society Annual Meeting 2015

The 36th Annual Meeting of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society was held on Friday, August 14, 2015, in Room 5 of the Donald Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont, Illinois, during the American Numismatic Association's 124th Anniversary Convention. President Marc Ricard called approximately forty numismatic bibliophiles to order precisely at 11.30 am. As has become customary, the agenda was overstuffed, and with Room 5 slated to be occupied by another group at 1:00 pm, Ricard ran the meeting, his French ancestry notwithstanding, with Prussian efficiency.

President Ricard's first order of business was to report on the outcomes of the previous day's NBS Board of Trustees meeting. To no one's surprise, the current slate of officers was overwhelmingly re-elected, so Ricard will serve another term as President, and Elizabeth Hahn Bengé as Vice President. A decision was taken to add two *ex-officio* members to the Board's ranks, namely *The E-Sylum's* editor, Wayne Homren, and the soon-to-be-named NBS Treasurer. Ricard could not reveal the Treasurer-Designate's name, but characterized him as a numismatist whose day job is at the helm of a bank. Outgoing Treasurer David Sundman is concluding his splendid run in that office by working to ensure that its duties are transferred smoothly to his successor. The Board also decided to add the name of the NBS Archivist/Historian—Joel J. Orosz—to the page of *The Asylum* listing all NBS Officers and Board Members.

A highlight of every NBS annual meeting is the announcement of awards, and this convocation featured the traditional recognitions plus an unusual dividend. Last year, the plaque accompanying the Joel J. Orosz Award for Best Article Appearing in *The Asylum* failed to arrive in time to be awarded at the annual meeting, so the winner, NBS co-founder George Frederick Kolbe, went home from Rosemont empty-handed. This injustice was corrected, as Orosz handed Kolbe the plaque in recognition of his article entitled "The Reminiscences of a Numismatic Bookseller." This year's Orosz Award winner, John J. Kraljevich,

went home with plaque in hand. He won for sharing another set of recollections, "In Memory of a Mensch," a memoir of the late numismatic bookseller John Burns. The Jack Collins Award, for Best Article by a First-Time Author in *The Asylum*, went to Eleonora Giampiccolo, for "A Brief History of the *Medagliere* of the Vatican Library."

In certain years since 2010, the NBS Board has bestowed the Association's highest honor, the George Frederick Kolbe Award, upon a person whose lifetime achievements in the field of numismatic literature provide an example for all to emulate. Past winners, in order of presentation, are George Frederick Kolbe, John W. Adams, Al Hoch (posthumously), and Dan Hamelberg. Entering the pantheon as of 2015 is Wayne Homren: a Past President of the NBS, the man who personally built the NBS website, and the founder, editor and publisher of the NBS electronic newsletter (and the premier electronic newsletter in all of numismatics), *The E-Sylum*. Wayne, who accepted the award with a few gracious remarks, continues to add to his laurels with his work on the Newman Numismatic Portal project.

Awards having been bestowed, President Ricard introduced the meeting's principal speaker, the first and still the only person ever to have earned a Ph.D. in numismatics from an accredited American university, Dr. Don Kagin. His topic was the famed Saddle Ridge Hoard of gold coins, providing the inside story of the discovery, preservation, and dispersal of its golden contents.

The tale begins with "John" and "Mary" (Kagin asserted that the hoard's discoverers wish to maintain the strictest confidentiality about their identities), and a fateful walk with their dog on their northern California property that utterly transformed their lives. Mary's sharp eyesight, and John's good work with a metal detector and a shovel, unearthed multiple metal cans containing \$27,980 face value in American gold coins, valued at approximately \$11 million today. The coins' date distribution was from 1847 to 1894, with the bulk of the coins dating from the 1880s.

John and Mary took their coins to Kagin's, which spent four months conserving them, before sending all to PCGS for certification and grading. About 95% were products of the San Francisco Mint, and no fewer than 14 of the hoard coins proved to be the finest known for the date. Kagin believes the original owner and creator of the hoard was an executive in the mining industry, but concedes that this is only a conjecture



on his part. One of the coins was donated to the National Numismatic Collection of the Smithsonian Institution; the rest were auctioned for the benefit of the publicity-shy owners, who have not informed even close family members of their good fortune. Kagin mused that his late father, Art Kagin, would no doubt be delighted that the firm he founded was handling this one-of-a-kind aggregation.

The balance of Kagin's speech focused on the investment potential inherent in gold coins—he asserted, for example, that we are in the beginning stages of a ten-year bull market in coins—which contents will not be recounted here. Kudos to Dr. Kagin, however, for directing all of the day's proceeds from the sale of his book, *Profit from Gold and Rare Coins Now*, to the NBS treasury.

Following a lively Q & A session with Dr. Kagin, Len Augsburgers took the floor to provide a brief progress report on the Newman Numismatic Portal, which covered much the same ground as the presentation the previous day at the NBS Symposium. (A summary of the Symposium presentation will follow this annual meeting summary).

David Sundman then delivered the final Treasurer's report of his long and distinguished tenure in that office. Membership, at 346, is up from last year's 344. The balance in the NBS exchequer stands at \$13,190.90, down \$1,000 from last year, and down \$6,000 from 2013. David noted that the dramatic slowing of the rate of decline is due to the suspension of the large annual charitable gifts formerly made to numismatic libraries. The treasury's balance was also boosted by the addition of \$3,450 from the 2014 NBS Benefit Auction, plus another \$217 earned in 2014 by selling back copies of *The Asylum*. Despite the transition to a new Treasurer, David announced that he will continue to warehouse back issues of *The Asylum*, and continue to fulfill orders for them.

With time running short (like barbarians, the next occupants of Room 5 were at the gates), the Benefit Auction was called in rapid-fire order by Past President Dan Freidus. Once more, Past President Dan Hamelberg and others provided a series of desirable books on which to bid. David Fanning was a strong buyer, as were stalwarts such as Tom Harrison and Dan himself (who, in a display of open-handed generosity to the NBS, bought back a couple of his own donations).

So ended a run that witnessed four of the last five NBS Annual meetings held in "Beautiful Downtown Rosemont." Next year, as the Pythons would have said, it will be time for "something completely

different." The 2016 annual meeting will move from windy Chicago to parched Los Angeles, or, to be more precise, from Rosemont to Anaheim. Here's to reconvening in 2016 not far from the "Happiest Place on Earth."

*Joel J. Orosz*

## Numismatic Bibliomania Society Symposium 2015

On Thursday, August 13, 2015, the Numismatic Bibliomania Society Symposium took place at the ANA Convention in Room 22. This year the presentation featured members of the Newman Numismatic Portal (NNP) including Len Augsburger, Gerry Fortin, John Feigenbaum, and Wayne Homren.

The presentation opened with an overview of the project, which is being administered by the library at Washington University in St. Louis and will produce a numismatic tool that is free to the community. As Len Augsburger explained, the project has partnered with the Internet Archive for assistance with scanning and hosting materials. Gerry Fortin talked about the value of open data and stressed that researchers should be encouraged to go online with their publications and look for new ways of distribution. John Feigenbaum, the technology lead, discussed aspects of the software side of the project. He talked about how the NNP would combine data from thousands of digitized books, auction catalogues, etc., that would be presented to the public with two primary components: 1) the Encyclopedia, which will give users access to a hierarchy of information that will tie directly into the second main component, 2) the Library, which is where the digitized items will be found. Links will connect to biographical information about authors and already the team has gathered over 2,000 entries so far. Wayne Homren concluded the presentation by discussing the long-term vision of the project versus the present reality. The team is eight months into a four-year project, which is being generously funded by the Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society. At present, there is still a lot of human-assisted processing of the information, but the goal is to have a system that automatically adds new content.

A lively question-and-answer session at the end of presentation showed a true interest in the project. Questions ranged from the extent of the project to include smaller organizations and clubs, to technical questions asking about OCR (optical character recognition) of the digi-

tized materials, which is a useful tool that is automatically run by Internet Archive and allows for better keyword searching within digitized materials. Len concluded the discussion by recognizing the involvement of several other team members and indicating he was hopeful that the website would go live at the end of 2015. Additional information can be found online at <http://newmannumismaticportal.com>

—Elizabeth Hahn Bengt

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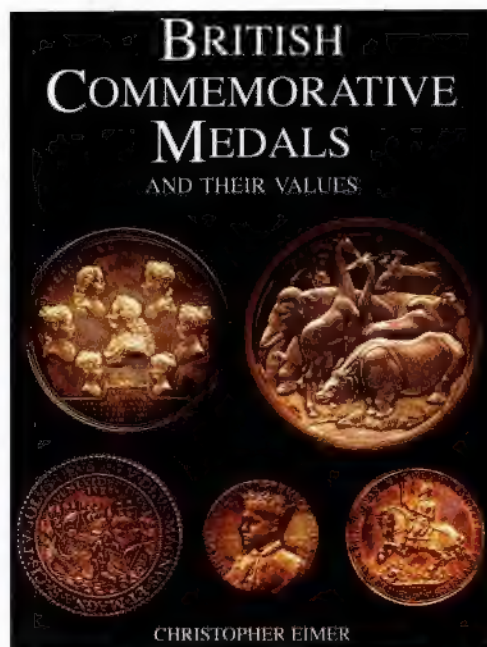
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